

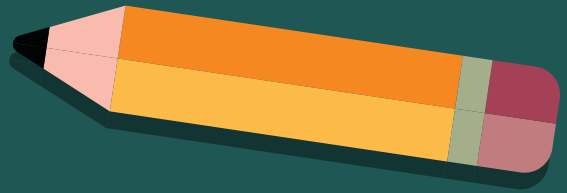
COMMUNICATING ACROSS DIFFERENCES



Interpersonal Skills
Emotional Regulation
Building Healthy Connections



This is a journaling activity. All you'll need is a pen or pencil, this booklet, and the artworks that came with it.



Describe a time when you had to solve a problem on a team and you disagreed with your teammate. How did your disagreements impact the conversation? Your problem-solving skills?



There are many problems in the world right now. Some of them are things you can solve by yourself, and many require time and collaboration. This journal and set of artworks give you ways to practice skills that can help you work with others, speak your mind, and change your world.



TWO-WORD WARM UP:

You are invited to check in with yourself throughout these activities. A check-in is especially helpful before you start a tough conversation. That way, you'll know what you're bringing with you.

Right now, I'm feeling... _____ and _____

PRACTICE ONE

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS



PEOPLE ARE ALL DIFFERENT

Our bodies, families, beliefs, abilities, and experiences can vary. Those differences can sometimes make communication hard. Artwork can often communicate what we do not have the words for across cultures and differences. You can use artwork to build curiosity and communication skills!



- 1 Look at all the artworks in the set.
- 2 Which one seems most comforting or familiar to you?
- 3 Which one seems the strangest or least familiar to you?
- 4 Focus on the least familiar artwork. Set the others aside for now.
- 5 Look closely at the least familiar artwork for 10 seconds. Write down a list of five things you can see. Then, list another five things.

I SEE...

- 6 How do you think the figures in the scene feel? What makes you say that?

I THINK _____ FEELS

- 7 If you had to ask three questions to better understand what's happening in the scene, what would you ask? Write these down, then write down three more.

I WONDER...

Close-ended questions can be answered with yes or no. Open-ended questions encourage conversation and can help you find things in common, even with people you don't agree with. Answers to these questions help you better understand another person's perspective.

For Steps 8 and 9, refer to your questions in Step 7.

8 Circle all your open-ended questions. They often begin with How? Why? What reason...?

9 Rewrite all your closed-ended questions to open-ended ones. For example, "Do you like ice cream?" can become "What flavor ice cream do you like most? Why?"

Read about the artwork on the back of the art card. Choose someone in the artwork and imagine taking that person's place.

After you choose a person in the artwork, re-read your open-ended questions from Steps 7 and 9.

10 Which question might be easiest for this person to answer? Put a star next to it. ★

11 Which question might be hardest for this person to answer? Draw a box around it.

- How else might someone ask that question? Write a new question below.
- Why might they ask it this new way?

12 Which question might be the scariest for this person to answer? Draw a zigzag line below it.

- How else might someone ask that question? Write a new question below.
- Why might they ask it this new way?

Pause: Might your most comfortable choice be someone else's strangest? What do you think about that?

You just tried on someone else's perspective. Step back into yourself using one of the tools on the next page.

PRACTICE TWO:

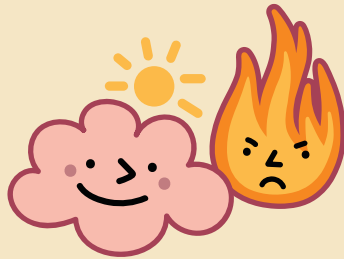
EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Sometimes talking with others (especially people we disagree with) can bring up feelings like boredom, nerves, frustration, and more. Maybe you noticed some of these feelings while you were looking at the unfamiliar artwork.

Imagine those feelings as tunnels. Managing your emotions can help you walk through that feeling and not get stuck.

1 CHECK IN:

Your body holds useful information. What do you notice in your breath? In your body?

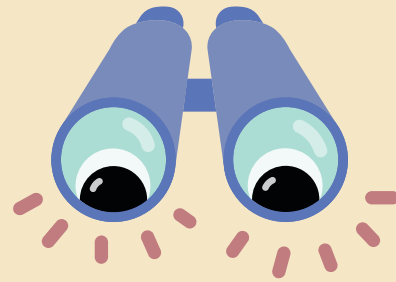
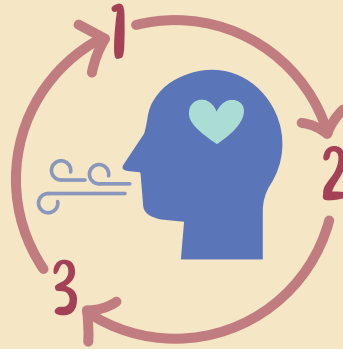


2 NAME IT:

What emotion are you feeling? Do you feel two emotions at the same time? Where in your body do you feel it?

3 BREATHE:

Breathe in slowly, counting to three. Then breathe out for three.



4 SCAN:

Where are you now? What are the norms and expectations in this place?

5 CHOOSE:

Which coping strategy might be most helpful?

a BREATHE

You did this before! Try counting slowly to five this time.



b USE YOUR SENSES

Look closely at something nearby. What colors can you name? What are the textures like? If you can safely touch it, what does it feel like under your fingers?

c TENSE & RELEASE

Tense your shoulders and zoom in on what it feels like. Stay tense for five seconds, then relax and breathe out. Try doing this with your hands, stomach, feet or wherever you felt tension in your body.

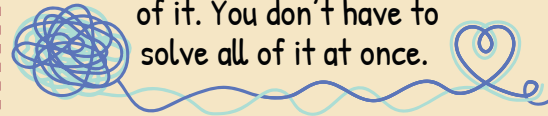
d TAKE A BREAK

You might say, "I want to talk about this more. I need five minutes to take a break. May I go outside?" During that time, you could have a drink of cold water or even shake out your body.



e LOOK FOR ONE THING

When we're having big feelings, things can feel like a tangle. If you're trying to solve a problem, just notice one part of it. You don't have to solve all of it at once.



f YES BUT...

Acknowledge the situation to yourself ("Yes, _____ happened.") Then name three positive thoughts about yourself. For example, "Yes, I got a low grade, but I understand my mistakes, it's almost lunchtime, and I can get a second chance with a makeup test tomorrow."

6 PLAN:

Now that you have helped yourself, what do you want to do next?



PRACTICE THREE:

IDENTIFYING NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

Supportive connections with others can help when you're working on a tough problem. Certain spaces, people, and places feel safe and comforting.

Feeling like part of a community can help give us purpose and motivation when problem solving gets tough. You belong to multiple communities, like a sports team, your classroom, and your neighborhood.

Look at all the artworks in the set. Choose one that reminds you of a community you belong to where the people help you to feel safe and welcome.

ARTWORK RESPONSE

1. What do you see in this artwork that makes it feel safe or welcoming? Draw those parts or people in the space at right. *Feel free to collage, watercolor, whatever you like!
2. Imagine walking into this artwork. What might you hear or smell? Add to the sketch you've started.
3. How might you change the artwork to make it even more welcoming? Add to your sketch.
4. Who might you add to this artwork to make it feel more welcoming or safe? Add them to this scene.
5. In what way(s) do your changes to the artwork reflect you? Write down some ideas.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What connections or feelings come up for you when you look at this artwork?
- What did you discover about things you need to see, hear, or smell in a space to feel welcome and safe?
- If some of the things that make a space feel welcoming and safe are missing, what strengths of your own can you call upon in that moment that can help?
- Who in your community makes you feel seen and supported? What does that person do or say?
- What do you need to feel safe and strong? How might you get more of this support? Where might you go (consider school, place of worship, community organization, etc.)?

PRACTICE FOUR: EMBRACING SELF EFFICACY

Look at all the artworks in the set. Choose one that reminds you of an issue you care about.



- Name the issue that you care about.
- Why does this issue matter to you?



- What are 2 strengths you have?
- What's 1 of your community's unique strengths?



- What goal might you set to help address the issue?
- How might you use the strengths you named?

IMAGINE YOURSELF ONE YEAR IN THE FUTURE:

- What would it look like if you achieved your goal? Describe the change or draw it below.

- What challenges did you overcome? What skills and strengths did you use? Describe or draw below.

WHAT BENEFIT WOULD YOUR WORK BRING TO YOUR COMMUNITY?

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SAAM

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